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THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER
25 January 1979

Letters to the editor

Iran: A history of meddling, repeated

To the Editor:

A historian once said, "History repeats itself, only the first time as tragedy, the second as farce."

The Peacock Throne in Iran is about to come tumbling down. Oil companies begin to calculate their losses. The CIA beefs up its Tehran station. Preparing to intervene itself, the United States warns that the Soviets will try to exploit the crisis.

Recent events, yet they are from another era. In 1953, with the Shah forced to flee the country, army strongman Zahedi got U.S. backing for a coup that ousted the reform government of Prime Minister Mossadegh, and with CIA-paid thugs rampaging in the streets, the Pahlavi dynasty was propped up again.

Once again, there is talk of a coup. Press reports leave no doubt about who is calling the shots. A squadron of F-15s is sent to nearby Saudi Arabia. With a U.S. super-carrier poised at one end of the Indian Ocean, a cruiser attack fleet is sent to patrol near the Persian Gulf. A special shipment of jet fuel is sent in. U.S. Gen. Huyser is dispatched to the scene, while Iranian military brass Oveisi and Azhari are kept at ready in the United States.

The Shah's ambassador to Washington, son of the CIA's 1953 strongman, returns to Tehran to plot with William Sullivan, ambassador to the Shah and past master of counterinsurgency in Southeast Asia. To clear the stage for the Bakhtiar farce to play itself out, the Shah leaves for a "vacation," and the announcement is made where? In Washington.

After all this, only the hopelessly self-deluded can conclude the United States will not resort to "manipulation," as your Jan. 11 story said, or that it "fears" a coup.

But things are different this time. The Iranian people are united in fierce opposition to any regime based on brutality, whether naked or cloaked by a Peacock. Without the democratic government they are fighting for, it will take an appalling flow of blood for the flow of oil and profits to resume to the United States and its allies.

Left to their own devices, White House aide Zbigniew Brzezinski, Defense Secretary Brown, CIA Director Stansfield Turner, and the oil magnates will see to it that history repeats itself, only this time as even greater tragedy.

ALAN DAWLEY

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